

# World Wide Web

## Air Force Portal weaves technological interface

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WASHINGTON — Air Force senior leaders have asked that all Airmen sign up for a new Web-based technology that promises to streamline access to information across the force — the Air Force Portal.

In a December information technology initiatives memo, Secretary of the Air Force Dr. James G. Roche and Chief of Staff of the Air Force Gen. John P. Jumper asked that all Airmen sign up for an Air Force Portal account as soon as possible.

“The Air Force Portal will be the Airman’s interface to all services and information needed to perform his or her job,” the memo stated.

Airmen may register for access to the portal by logging onto the Web site at <https://www.my.af.mil> and clicking on the self-registration link. The registration process is self-guided.

The portal is a Web-based system developed to incorporate as many Air Force information applications as possible. The result of such an integration is that systems such as the virtual military personnel flight or functional area applications, such as a munitions ordering or parts tracking system, would all be accessible from one Web site, said Lt. Col. Dan Hausauer, portal integration division chief.

**The key benefit to such an integration is the idea of a single user login.** Once a user logs in, the portal itself authenticates a user into the application. This means that with each new application integrated into the portal, users will have one less Web address, login name and password to remember, Colonel Hausauer said.

“People can log into the portal with a single user name and password, and from there, they can get to their applications without having to reauthenticate,” Colonel Hausauer said. “Some users within the logistics community have told me that in the past they’ve had (more than) 50 user names and password combinations, and now they need only one.”

**A recent change to the portal makes it even easier for users to get access.** Now, users can access the system

from any Internet-connected computer at home, at work or on the road, Colonel Hausauer said.

When users are on temporary duty, the portal makes it easy to stay in contact with co-workers at permanent duty stations in real-time. The portal now includes an instant messaging system similar to those found on the dot-com side of the Internet. The Air Force Instant Messenger was used most recently during operations in Southwest Asia, Colonel Hausauer said.

“When the war kicked off, a lot of people on the front lines had difficulty getting to phone lines,” Colonel Hausauer said. “People with network connectivity were using AFIM to do their job, like ordering mission-essential parts for aircraft or ‘IMing’ back to their home station in the United States to ask for assistance.”

During those operations, AFIM had been set up to interface with commercial messaging systems so deployed Airmen could communicate with friends and family on their buddy lists. That capability has been temporarily disabled, but Colonel Hausauer said it would return following a security review.

Besides providing an integrated interface to existing Air Force applications, the portal provides functionality of its own. The portal includes a “white pages” section that lists everybody in the Air Force. It includes personalization features that let users adjust the presentation to suit their needs. The system even allows users to upload favorites from their desktop computers, so those frequently used Web addresses are available from anywhere in the world.

**As more systems are brought into the portal, the Air Force moves closer to its overall vision for a Net-centric force.**

“The Air Force vision is to bring a virtual desktop to the Airman and to bring all the applications you need to do your job to that desktop,” Colonel Hausauer said. “You will have the ability to access them all with one login name and password, they will all work together seamlessly, and you will be able to access them from anywhere. That is the future.”

